



I Won't Lose Hope by Just-Your-AAverage-FanGGurl

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Romance, Supernatural

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2019-08-04 14:42:50

Updated: 2019-08-04 14:42:50

Packaged: 2019-12-12 16:57:30

Rating: K +

Chapters: 1

Words: 4,940

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: No one could have stopped what happened at the Battle of Starcourt, yet Mike blames himself. What could he have done different? Could he have saved her? The crazy, griefstricken part of his brain tells him 'She's El! She has to come back!' He doesn't want to lose his hope... but will she? — One-shot. Give it a chance, it took me four days! :)

I Won't Lose Hope

One of the Mindflyer's slimy arms reached out towards El, who was struggling in the arms of Billy.

"We're out!" Lucas screamed.

A few moments after, Starcourt Mall was no longer lit up with fireworks. The Mindflyer stood up, towering over the terrorized Eleven.

"No! Billy!" Max yelled until her voice was raw, the same words over and over. "You don't have to do this! Leave El alone!"

Mike stood there, too scared to move. Terror ran through his veins, ice cold. He had never felt anything like this. Not during any of the times him and his party had fought these horrid creatures, no, this was different.

Mike loved El. With every last particle in his body, he loved El. He would always love El.

And in that moment, Mike was watching the girl he loved scream her lungs out. Because she was about to die. As if in slow motion, the Mindflyer's tentacles whipped out, all headed straight for El, now limp in Billy's arms.

Mike had never run faster in his life. Yet, all he could do was watch as the Mindflyer stabbed the love of his life right through her stomach, right through Billy as well. Lucas grabbed his horror-stricken friend, and held him tight, for that was all he could do. Mike screamed heart-wrenching screams as the Mindflyer turned into dust and floated away, taking El with it. Billy fell to the ground and Max cried out, but there was nothing she could do.

Those same heartrenching screams didn't stop as all Mike's friends crowded around him, holding his hand and hugging him. They didn't stop when he was in the back of an ambulance, being comforted by Joyce Byers. They didn't stop when Hopper cried right along side him. In fact, Mike only stopped screaming when he was at home.

lying in bed besides his mother.

His mother, who's heart was broken because her only son's was shattered, and she couldn't do anything but hold his hand.

6 Days After

"Hey Mike. I know you're hurting. And I know you haven't gotten out of bed since *it* happened.. but I just want to let you know," Will's voice was wobbly, "I just want to let you know that I'm gonna be here for you. Just like, ahem, sorry, just like you were there for me when the Mindflayer hurt me." The boy rubbed away tears that had cascaded down his cheeks.

15 Days After

"How's he doing? I don't want Will go intruding into your lives every day unless you think it's helping." Joyce said.

Mrs Wheeler sighed into the phone, "No, no. He should keep coming. I think it's definitely helping him. The others have come over a couple times. Maxine too," She frowned. "But they all refuse to go into the basement. I've gone down there once to clean things up a bit. And Maxine's been a bit off since Billy.. you know. Anyways, how's Hopper?"

Now it was Joyce's time to sigh. "He's been drinking a lot more. And he won't go back to his cabin. I'm really worried about him, yknow? He's lost Sarah already... I can't imagine what he's going through now."

"Of all people, why did this happen to us? To our kids. Nothing is ever supposed to happen in Hawkins."

"God, I know. Our kids." Joyce gasped, "I have a customer. I better go, but I'll call you again soon."

The line went dead and Mrs Wheeler sat down to cry.

22 Days After

Today was the dreaded funeral. Whatever grief Mike had previously gotten over was back, and stronger than ever. He left the house for the first time since *it* happened, dressed in black. It was closed casket, as they couldn't find her body.

The casket top was so shiny that Mike could see his reflection in it. But every time he looked, he only sobbed harder. Guilty sobs now wracked through his body. *What if he could have fought off Billy? El wouldn't be .. gone. It was all his fault.* The only clear thought in his brain was how *it was all his fault.*

No one could tell him it wasn't. Not even when he cried so hard he couldn't see, and he fell and scraped his knee while walking home. No one could tell him it wasn't his fault when he got home and trashed the basement. His mother could only whisper it in his ear as she held him, crying in his bed. Again.

Of course it wasn't his fault, but you don't need water to feel like your drowning, do you?

54 Days After

The party was regularly hanging out now, but never in the basement if the Wheelers household. No, instead they went to the forest behind Will's house, where they had rebuilt Castle Byers.

Of course, they joked, they laughed, they had fun. But there was always something missing. Or rather, someone.

By now, school had started up. People whispered in the hallways. Any mention of El brought tears to the friend groups eyes.

99 Days After

Eleven laughed as Mike belted out the lyrics to Never Surrender by Corey Hart.

She grabbed his hands. "Mike!" She giggled.

"What?" He feigned innocence, "You don't like it?"

"Nooo," She laughed harder.

He leaned in to kiss her. Before their lips could meet, El gasped and pulled away.

"You okay?" He looked down to where she was clutching her stomach. Blood was seeping through the fabric of her grey t-shirt. "No, no, no! El! You'll be okay, you'll be okay!" He pushed her blanket against the wound.

"Mike," She grabbed his hands and looked him straight in the eye. "Don't give up hope."

He woke up in a cold sweat, his pillow damp with tears.

106 Days After

By now, Mike thought he may be going crazy. A week ago, he went down into the basement again. His mother had cleaned it up, after he recklessly destroyed it. He rebuilt the mini fort he had made, where El had first stayed. He cried hard the first night he had sat in it. But since then, he has put on a brave face.

In his heart, he had the tiniest spark of hope. Hope that maybe, the Mindflayer didn't die, he just went back to the upside down and took El with him. Maybe El was alive. Maybe that dream was more than just *a dream*. The first year that he had spent without her he never, ever gave up hope. Mike put the radio to his mouth. Why should he now?

"El?" His voice was hopeful. "Eleven? Are you there? Just.. just give me a sign."

Maybe he was just going crazy.

125 Days After

For the past week, the party has been trying to reach El.

This time, Will held the radio up to his face. "Is anyone out there? El?"

The radio produced static.

"El?" Will questioned.

"Mi-" Static.

Mike gasped. Max grabbed Lucas's hand, and Dustin cursed.

Will dropped the radio in shock. "Did you hear that? That was something!" A distorted female voice had come through. Could it have been El?

This time Dustin picked it up and spoke. "Hello? Who was that?"

More radio static.

Dustin began to speak again, but Lucas cut him off with a groan. "Guys. We are chasing tails here. We've been at this for over a week, now, and we've gotten nothing! Don't you think that if El was still out there, she would try to contact us?"

Mike stood up. "She did Lucas!"

"I'm not talking about whatever we just heard! We're on a dead channel, and it was probably some interference! That's all." Lucas sighed. "We can't fix this Mike. She's gone and there's no coming back."

Will stood up with Mike. "You don't," His eyes began to water. "You don't know that."

"I do know that!" Lucas was yelling now, "You wanna know how I know that? I watched her die! There is nothing we could've done! I

watched. We all did. It's just time for you to accept the fact that she's gone!"

"Shut up," Mike squeezed his eyes shut. "Just shut up!"

"You're going to cry now? Again?" Lucas rolled his eyes. "It's pathetic Mike, really."

Max smacked Lucas's arm. "What the hell is wrong with you?"

"Leave. Right now." Mike's eyes were still closed.

Lucas muttered curses under his breath as he stomped upstairs.

"I'm so sorry. I'm gonna knock some sense into him." Max followed him up.

"Steve is supposed to be here any minute." Dustin started walking up the stairs. "But Mike, I believe you. El can do miraculous things. She is a miracle. I'll talk to Lucas too."

Will and Mike were silent for a few moments, but Mike's crazy voice broke the pause. "I'm not going crazy."

"Of course you're not." Will patted Mike's arm.

"I know that I'm not going crazy." Mike rubbed his temples. "I had this dream. Well, no, at first it was more like a memory. And El was there. I was about to kiss her again, but instead of Hopper stopping us, she started bleeding. Right where she had been stabbed."

I tried to stop the bleeding, but I couldn't. Eventually, she pulled my hands off of her and she said something." He sighed. "She told me not to give up hope. And then I woke up. But that's why I've been doing this, and that's why I finally told the party. I think she's still alive."

196 Days After

Lucas leaned up against a locker that was neighboring Mike's. "Mike. I'm really sorry for how I acted the other night. It was really out of

line, and to be honest, I don't know why I did it." He said, "If it were Max, I know I'd be doing what you're doing now. But the party isn't the same without you. It's completely up to you, but if you'll have me, I'd love to have our paladin back.." Lucas smiled hopefully.

"I think that might work out." Mike smirked.

278 Days After

Mike missed El every day. But it was getting better. He still radioed her every night, no matter how late it was. But now he was starting to think. How much longer would he be doing this? Will El ever respond? Is she even still alive?

Mike promised her that he would always be there for her. He wants going to break that promise, because he would've been lying to her.

And friends don't lie.

326 Days After

Will was biking home alone. The party is going to meet up at the arcade later, but after a long day of school they thought it best to take a break for a bit, at their respective homes.

All the sudden, Will lost control of his bike. A feeling of dread coursed through him, and chills raised on the back of his neck.

The Mindflayer.

365 Days After

It was officially a year since El's supposed death. Hopper stayed inside all day, and Mike didn't get up till 1 pm. The party brought flowers to her grave. As they were walking, they didn't notice the few rotting trees they had passed.

Will turned around as the rest of the group was talking around her grave. He had gotten the chills again, and this time they weren't going away. He turned around quickly, his voice dark. "Guys!"

A concerned Mike headed over to him. "Is something wrong?"

The party quieted down.

"I know this is horrible timing, considering the date and all," Will's voice quickened with panic. "But I feel him. The Mindflyer. He's *here*."

"You're kidding." Dustin deadpanned.

"I wouldn't joke about this. I felt it a few weeks ago when I was riding my bike home, but I thought

I had just gotten cold." Will shrugged.

"Cold. Right." Lucas laughed *coldly*, "Because we get extreme chills in the beginning of summer. Totally normal."

Max interrupted, "Wait. Guys. What do we know about the Mindflyer?"

Dustin's voice raised a few octaves. "That he lives to eat innocent humans like us so he can grow and take over the world!"

"Aside from that!" She waved her hand in the air as she talked. "What is his goal?"

"To get El." Lucas said.

"Exactly. To get El." She threw her arms out. "It only ever comes from the Upside Down if it wants El."

Will gasped. "And if it's here.."

"El.. El is here?" Mike couldn't help the tiniest bit of excitement that was in his voice. Yes of course the Mindflyer being here was horrible, but El was alive!

373 Days After

The party had a plan. Like always, they expected their plan to be derailed, so they had a plan b and a plan c. If those two plans failed, then they were doomed. After long deliberation, Will said the place he felt the most chills was near the Starcourt Mall, where the Mindflayer was almost defeated last time. So, the plan was to try and reach El through the radio. The party would tell her that if she can hear us, then we would meet at Starcourt Mall, tomorrow at 7:15, on the dot.

El was a stickler for timing, Mike reminded them.

Hopper would evacuate the mall, and then go get Joyce and the Army. The Mall had a spa. They would take all the heaters they could find from the spa and their houses and put them in the Mall. Mike and El and Will would run into one of the stores, far enough where El would be safe, but she's still be able to use her powers against the creature. Dustin and Steve would be situated with Dustin's ham radio, ready to call in for backup. Backup being Hopper and the US Army, again.

Nancy and Jonathan would then bring in the fireworks, just like last time. Once it was hot enough, and the Mindflayer was weak enough, El will use her power to send it back to where it came from.

However, this is all dependent on if El was even alive.

374 Days After

Mike was a bundle of nerves, excitement, and fear. The whole day he wasn't able to sit still. Time had passed like molasses being poured on a hot day. Slowly, and very, very boringly.

Finally, the clock read 6:45. He rushed out of the house and got on his bike. All he could think about was El. Was she alive? Did she even get the radioed message? What would happen if we were just luring the Mindflayer to the mall, no El in sight?

He pushed his doubts down. He had to believe that the glass was half full, and that the odds were in his favor. In his haze of doubt, he almost biked straight into Will.

"Dude!" Will exclaimed, "You're here! Snap out of it!"

It was 7:07, and only Max and Will were here. Mike was shaking so hard he dropped his heaters, and Max had to help pick them up.

"Are you scared?" She asked.

"Yeah." Mike raked his hand through his hair.

"Me too." She sighed. "And honestly, I don't know what I would do if El isn't alive. What if we were all wrong about her?"

Mikes heart panged at the idea.

"Look!" Will pointed over Mikes shoulder. "There's Lucas. Should we head inside now?" It was 7:10. The mall should have been evacuated by 7:00, so the party was in the clear.

In an unspoken agreement, the party lugged the heaters inside. It was 7:13 when they stopped when the stopped at the Food Court. Eagerly, Mike and Max looked around for Eleven.

Starcourt Mall was empty.

"What?" Mike dropped his heater and breathlessly spoke, "How were we wrong? I was so sure! God, what have I done?"

"Mike." Max's eyes widened.

"Max! We're all gonna die tonight!"

"Mike." Max dropped her heater.

"Max! Max, we're going to get killed by that psycho monster! And it's gonna be all my fault."

Lucas cursed. "Mike! Jesus! Look!"

Mike turned around.

Standing on the far side of the Food Court was El. She was wearing long jeans and a t-shirt she had probably gotten from the Gap. "7:15," she said, "On the dot." Sure enough, it was 7:15 on the dot.

"El.." Mike's eyes blurred with tears, and before he knew it, he and El had met in the middle of the Food Court.

El stood on her tip toes and wrapped her arms tight around his neck, pulling him close. "Mike."

"I thought," His voice cracked. "I thought I lost you! You were gone.. oh my god, El, oh my god." He started crying into her shoulder.

She pulled him even closer to her.

"Wait," He pulled away, just enough so he could see her face. "I had a dream. You were- you were... Was it you?"

She nodded yes. "I tried talking to you. But you never heard. Through the radio."

Mike pulled out of the hug as the rest of the party walked over, but El kept a firm grip on his hand. Max shed a few tears, and Will was happy to see his friend home.

"El," Lucas rubbed the back of his head. "I just wanted to say I'm sorry for not believing you were alive."

"It's okay." She smiled and turned to Mike. "Hopper?"

"We'll see him after. Right now, we have to plug in the heaters." He looked around for outlets. "Hey, El and I will go grab the big heaters from the spa."

"Okay, but no funny business you two!" Max wagged her finger at the pair who were now running away.

El giggled as they turned the corner. "Funny business?" She wiggled her eyebrows.

"El!" Mike laughed.

They walked to the spa. Mike bent down to lift the gate so they could get into the spa.

When he turned around, El put her hands on his chest. "Mike," She whispered.

The boy leaned down and closed the gap between them. Kissing her was magical, and he thought he'd never feel this way again. Her curly hair was longer and softer. Mike thought it suited her. El was still the most dazzling girl he had ever seen. Even-

"Hey!" Will jumped out from behind the corner. "Max said no funny business! No we have got to get the heaters and go!"

El pulled away giggling, and she ran and grabbed two big heaters. Both Mike and Will followed her back to the Food Court. Nancy and Jonathan were here with the Fireworks. They both hugged El hello, before following Lucas up to where they would set up with half the fire works. The other half would be downstairs with Lucas and Max.

After everything was set up, Mike sat down on a bench and put his head in his hands. The room was already getting hot.

El followed him. "Scared?"

He sighed, "Yeah."

"Of what?"

Mike sat up and grabbed El's hand. "I don't want to lose you again. I don't know what I'd do."

She squeezed his hand. "You won't lose me. I promise."

"That's a hard promise to keep."

"I promise!" She smiled. "Things will go different this time. There is no way I'm spending a year running from that *thing* again." El shuddered.

"I wish I could have done something. Every day I thought about what I change and it's easy." He rubbed his forehead with his free hand. "I

would have done anything, *anything* to not let Billy get you. And I keep remembering what happened that night. It was hard to even step in the mall."

"Shhh," She pulled his head towards her. "It's not your fault, you cannot blame yourself. I won't let you."

"Guys.." Will interrupted everyone. "It's time." A distant roar shuddered the building.

Lucas and Max took their place, below Nancy and Jonathan. Nancy and Jonathan would run around in the top level throwing fireworks, while Lucas and Max were on the bottom. Mike, Will, and El decided to run into the Gap.

The Gap looked exactly how it did last July. Mike turned around the cash register, and saw younger him, El, and Max hiding behind it. He gasped.

"You okay?" Will clapped his hand on Mike's shoulder, startling him out of whatever flashback he was in.

"Yeah. Let's just.." He pulled some clothes racks around the register, as to shield them.

Mike put his arm around El and pulled her close to him. She leaned her head on his shoulder. Will was shaking so hard the couple could hear his teeth chattering.

Thump. Thump. Thump.

There it was. The Mindflyer was climbing onto the roof. *Just like last time.* With one big, heavy jump, it crashed into the mall.

As soon as it entered into the hit room, it roared. Max and Lucas ran around yelling obscenities, while Nancy and Jonathan started on the fireworks. Soon after, Max and Lucas threw theirs too.

The three sitting behind the cash register silently rose up to watch. There were colorful explosions, as well as the shouts of their friends. El was sure she had just seen a potted tree thrown down! The Mindflyer hissed and roared as it blindly snapped out.

"El!" Lucas yelled, "We need you! We're almost out of fireworks!"

El had to close her eyes for a moment and breathe before she could stand up.

"Wait! El," Mike grabbed her hands before she walked away. "I love you!"

She bent down and kissed him on the lips, before running out there.

Will chuckled. "Nice going."

"I had to tell her," He sighed. "In case anything happened. Do you think they need us?"

The two boys got on their knees and watched what was happening. As soon as she was out there, the Mindflyer immediately headed for her. She reached her arms out and threw each of its slimy tentacles in every direction. One she threw so hard, it hit a column behind her and went limp.

Mike's mind flashed back to when the Mindflyer had stabbed her. The way she fell limp almost immediately, how she looked so small lying there. He could see what was about to happen clearly, and he had to stop it. The column behind her had cracked in three places, and they were about to fall on her.

Mike ran out there, faster than he had ever ran before. His friends yelled his name. They told him to stop, that he would get hurt! He didn't listen. The column was tumbling!

Mike wrapped his arms around El's waist and threw all his body weight into her. They landed on the ground with a *smack!* El was on top of Mike, and he groaned as the realization of what he just did settled.

She pulled him to his feet and put her arm protectively in front of her. Bursts of light fell to the ground from remaining fireworks, distracting it while El slowly tore it into pieces.

Max screamed and pointed above the couple. The column had been supporting part of the upstairs floor, which was now crumbling on

them. Mike and El sprinted over to where Max was standing. El smartly used pieces of the fallen ceiling as weapons against the monster. She threw chunks of cement into its body, its mouth. It even weighed down a few of its arms!

Mike heard something writhing along the floor. He turned slowly, only to see the tentacle that had caused the column to fall. Before he could shout El's name, the tentacle shot out and tightened around his waist. No one noticed until he was up in the air, screaming his lungs out.

"Mike!" El yelled. She couldn't do anything to help him. If she severed the tentacle holding him, he would fall to his death. For the first time in a long time, El felt helpless.

Max looked up to where Jonathan was running. He pointed to one of the tall heaters. He was close enough to it that if he pushed it over, it would land on the Mindflayer's tentacle! The one that had Mike wrapped up. When she looked up at Nancy, Nancy was holding four more unlit fireworks. *Wow*, Max thought. *This team works like a well oiled machine.*

"El! I know how to get him down! I need you to trust me."

"I trust you!" El didn't look at her, but she nodded.

"When Mike starts to fall, you need to help him get to the ground safely." Then Max sprinted over so she was under Mike.

Jonathan pushed the heater over. As expected, the monster bellowed and let go of Mike. At that same time, fireworks were being thrown in its face again. El reached out an arm and softened Mike's falls across the room. Max quickly pulled him over to Lucas. By the looks of it, he was unconscious.

Seeing him like that made her blood boil. This creature has caused so much damage to her friends- no. Mike wasn't just a friend to El. He was something much more. They had been through hell and back together. He was more than a boyfriend. He was a *part* of her.

But the danger this monster brought would end here. Today. El let

out a shrill scream, and raised both her arms. She tore the creature in half, and ripped out each its limbs. It deserved to suffer. She felt blood trickle out of both her nostrils as she used every ounce of power she had to destroy this *thing*.

She finished with a scream louder than the rest. And just like that, it was over. The monster fell to the floor, before disintegrating into a pile of red goop and ash.

El fell onto the floor, panting. The world faded in and out. She dizzily stood up and wobbled over to where Mike was.

She ran her hand through his curls. "Mike. Mike, wake up."

Nancy and Jonathan came down. Nancy handed El a random shirt for her to wipe away the blood on her face. Somewhere in the distance, a helicopter whirled.

"Oh my god." Nancy knelt by her brother's side. "Mike?"

His eyelids fluttered.

El and Nancy chorused, "Mike!"

"El?" Mike lifted himself up. "Are you okay? Are you hurt?" He cupped her face with his hand.

El shook her head. "Dizzy, but okay."

"Guys?" Lucas interrupted. "Is something burning?"

Jonathan looked around. He cursed under his breath. "The heater that fell over caught one of the benches on fire. We have to leave, now."

The group looked over to where the exit once was. It was now covered in rubble.

"Scoops has an exit, if we can make it there!" Lucas pointed down the hall.

El stood up, and immediately tumbled to the ground.

"El!" Mike reached out to her.

"I'm okay. Dizzy." She rubbed her forehead.

Everyone stood up. Mike wrapped his arm around El, and they supported each other. The smoke was starting to get thicker as they walked away.

Outside the building, they could hear sirens and helicopters, no doubt the army and fire trucks, maybe even ambulances that Dustin had called in for. All they had to do was get outside and they'd be safe, for once and for all.

In the back of an ambulance, Mike and El shared a blanket and passed an oxygen mask between them. Mike gripped El's hand tightly.

All the sudden, shouts erupted. "Where is she?" A man yelled.

He broke through the crowd of people standing around the ambulances.

"El!" Hopper rushed over and took the girl in his arms. "Hey, kiddo."

She wrapped her free arm around his neck. "Hop." She said, smiling.

Mike let go of her hand so she could hug Hopper better, but she only interlocked their fingers again. El was keen on letting Mike get away again.

El explained everything to Hopper, including how she survived fun the Upside Down for so long. Eventually, he let go of her and went to go check on Joyce and Will.

Eleven turned to Mike. She leaned closer to him, "Y'know, about what you said earlier.."

Butterflies tickled Mike's stomach. "Y-Yeah?" He stuttered.

"Mike," she leaned closer. "I love you too." And she did. In fact,

something told her she was going to live this boy for the rest of her life, if not longer.

Mike broke out into a smile. "You meant it?"

Eleven wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him.

And that was the day where Mike decided the only fireworks he would ever need in July were the ones he was feeling right now.

:)